

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00
XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 EPG-02 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-04
CEA-01 AF-10 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 /145 W
-----030485 012146Z /72

P R 011845Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2378
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
USSOUTHCOM
AMCONSUL CALI
AMCONSUL BARRANQUILLA
AMCONSUL MEDELLIN

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT PINS PORG CO
SUBJ: THE WEEK IN COLOMBIA

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENT LOPEZ AGAIN DEFENDED THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF HIS ADMINISTRATION. THE LIBERAL PARTY'S VARIOUS FACTIONS DEBATED THE NEED FOR A MAJORITY VOTE IN SELECTING THE PARTY'S PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, A DEBATE WHICH POINTED OUT SOME VAGUENESS IN THE SAN CARLOS AGREEMENT. THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT WILL OPPOSE MEMBERSHIP OF THE PLO IN ECOSOC'S ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA. SMALL-SCALE GUERRILLA ACTIVITIES CONTINUED IN ISOLATED AREAS, WHILE IN BOGOTA INVESTIGATIONS CONCERNING A MYSTERIOUS "DEATH SQUAD" HAVE BEEN ORDERED. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT HIGHLIGHTS ADMINISTRATION'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

IN A PRESS INTERVIEW ANALYZING HIS THREE YEARS IN OFFICE,
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PRESIDENT LOPEZ EMPHASIZED SEVERAL OF HIS ADMINISTRATION'S ACHIEVEMENTS. AMONG THE MOST IMPORTANT NOTED WERE: 1) THE GOC'S RENEWAL OF RELATIONS WITH CUBA "BEFORE THE UNITED STATES GAVE US THE GREEN LIGHT"; 2) THE REFORMATION OF THE VATICAN CONCORDAT TO ALLOW FOR REVISIONS AFTER A TEN-YEAR PERIOD"; 3) THE ENACTMENT OF EQUALITY FOR WOMEN IN CIVIL LAW"; 4) THE IMPLEMENTATION OF "THE MOST PROGRESSIVE TAX

REFORM IN LATIN AMERICA", AND, 5) THE LEGAL RECOGNITION OF LEFT-WING LABOR CONFEDERATIONS: THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED COLOMBIAN CONFEDERATION OF WORKERS (CSTC) AND THE CHRISTIAN-DEMOCRATIC RELATED GENERAL WORKERS' CONFEDERATION (CGT). PRESIDENT LOPEZ SAID HIS ADMINISTRATION WILL CONTINUE TO CARRY OUT VARIOUS LIBERAL PARTY PROGRAMS, INCLUDING REFORMS IN DEPARTMENTAL AND MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATIONS, AND IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM. THIS INTERVIEW SETS THE STAGE FOR THE PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REVIEW WHICH WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE OPENING SESSION OF CONGRESS ON JULY 20.

2. LIBERAL PARTY DEBATES PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE SELECTION PROCEDURE. LIBERAL PARTY PRE-CANDIDATE HERNANDO AGUDELO VILLA INITIATED A SHARP DEBATE WITHIN LIBERAL PARTY CIRCLES EARLY THIS WEEK WHEN HE PROPOSED THAT THE SAN CARLOS AGREEMENT BE INTERPRETED SO THAT THE SELECTION OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE BY THE PARTY CONVENTION BE BY ABSOLUTE MAJORITY. THIS PROPOSAL HAS BEEN REJECTED BY THE TWO PRINCIPAL PRE-CANDIDATES, CARLOS LLERAS AND JULIO CESAR TURBAY, WHO ARGUE THAT THE AGREEMENT ONLY CALLS FOR A SIMPLE PLURALITY. AGUDELO'S BACKERS TOLD EMBASSY THAT THE INITIATIVE WAS AIMED AT INCREASING AGUDELO'S BARGAINING POWER DURING THE PARTY CONVENTION, BY MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR AGUDELO TO SWING EITHER OF THE TWO PRINCIPAL PRE-CANDIDATES OVER THE 50 PERCENT MARK. IT WOULD ALSO TEND TO KEEP AGUDELO'S HOPES ALIVE AS A COMPROMISE CANDIDATE IN THE EVENT OF A DEAD-LOCK BETWEEN THE TWO PRINCIPAL PRE-CANDIDATES.

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AGUDELO'S INTERPRETATION OF THE AGREEMENT POINTS OUT THE VAGUENESS OF ITS LANGUAGE AND THE NEED FOR CLARIFICATIONS BEFORE THE CONVENTION IS HELD. THE AGUDELO FORCES PLAN TO USE TURBAY'S REJECTION OF THEIR INITIATIVE TO ATTACK HIS CLAIMS THAT A MAJORITY OF THE PARTY SUPPORTS HIS CANDIDACY.

3. MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS. A FONOFF OOFICIAL TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT THE GOC WOULD OPPOSE PLO MEMBERSHIP IN THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA AT THE JULY ECOSOC MEETING. COLOMBIA'S POSITION IS BASED ON LEGAL PRINCIPLE AND ON THE CONCERN THAT ONE OF THE GUERRILLA GROUPS OPERATING IN COLOMBIA COULD EVENTUALLY BE PROPOSED FOR MEMBERSHIP IN A U.N. AGENCY. (BOGOTA 6096).

4. PUBLIC ORDER. IN VARIOUS CLASHES IN RURAL COLOMBIA THIS WEEK, ARMY TROOPS KILLED SIX GUERRILLAS AND CAPTURED OTHERS WHILE MEMBERS OF THE SOVIET-LINE FARC GUERRILLA MOVEMENT AMBUSHED AND KILLED TWO POLICEMEN. THE CUBAN-LINE ELN USED THE LEFTIST MAGAZINE "ALTERNATIVA" TO PUBLISH A COMMUNIQUE TAKING CREDIT FOR THE EXECUTION OF AN ARMY NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER THEY ACCUSED OF TORTURING PEASANTS. IN BOGOTA, A SPECIAL INVESTIGATOR WAS APPOINTED TO EXAMINE

TWO MURDERS APPARENTLY COMMITTED BY A MYSTERIOUS "DEATH
SQUADRON" WHICH, ACCORDING TO THE DYING ALLEGATIONS OF
ONE VICTIM, IS COMPOSED OF DETECTIVES FROM THE F-2 SECTION OF THE
NATIONAL POLICE.
DREXLER

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